

December 1991

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New EXpression

A PUBLICATION OF YOUTH COMMUNICATION

A hug gives her a
reason to smile,
and a homeless teen
captures the moment.

Teens are living
in others' homes...
their own homes...
or no homes at all...

pages 3-9

VOL. 15 NO. 10

December
1991

WHAT'S INSIDE:
CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAYS • "IMAJICA"

Well, well, well. The teachers decided not to go on strike! Phew! Now that I caught my breath, I can talk about the issue. A lot of teens were avidly watching newscasts during November worrying whether the teachers would "strike" again. This was a very crucial time; especially for seniors. Application deadlines would have been one big mess. Well, let's not even mention how terrible things would have gotten. Let's just thank our lucky stars that the teachers settled for a 3 percent pay raise this year which will be followed by 7 percent raise next year. Although there was a settlement made, there will be several cutbacks in the system including more schools closing next year and cutbacks in transportation.

Ever since the Nov. 6 outburst at Farragut High School, a predominantly Hispanic school where 14 were injured and 40 arrested, the local media has been paying lots of attention to school rioting. But this incident is nothing new; it's only the first of such a large size this year. Last year several schools had major uproars including Morgan Park High School.

The Art Institute is offering some fun-filled "holly day" festivities. The events include 30-minute gallery lectures from December 18-23 beginning at 12:30 p.m. Each participant will receive a free introduction to the master works of art in the permanent collection. There will also be workshops offered from noon to 3:00 beginning on Dec. 27 and continuing through Dec. 30. For more information call Museum Education at (312) 443-3680.

QUICK-Do you know where last years yearbook is? According to a recent study by Louis Harris and Associates, most Americans do. Yearbooks were named by both parents and teens as the number one keepsake from highschool. The survey questioned 500 teens and their parents. Fifty percent of the teens said they would keep their yearbook. The yearbook has always stood as a marker of time, a piece that students put together themselves to remember their high school years. So, store your book away in the attic, it might be good for a few laughs in the future.

Did you know that nearly 500 books are labeled dangerous and are being banned? Most are censored because of their direct references to sex, although books such as Little Red Riding Hood was banned in California because of wine present in an illustration. Other books being challenged are "Of Mice and Men", "The Witches", "I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings", and "Angel Face". Schools are considered to be the number one promoter to pull books off the library shelves. Luckily, only 15 percent of the attempts are actually successful.

You better sit down for this! Executives nation-wide are attempting to rid malls of teens who are hanging out. In fact, even at the Watertown classical music is being played to stop loitering teens. But it is not working...HA!HA! Chicago teens are not offended - if we can listen to elevator music, we can certainly handle classical music.

-Jolie Nicola
Morgan Park High School

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Washington, D.C. deals with 'shelter kids'



WASHINGTON, D.C. (YNS)—Lurking among Washington area classrooms is a group of students who face more than the everyday hassles of homework, exams, and teachers. For as they leave school, they have all but a home to return to.

Few people realize the extent of the homeless youth problem, says Ella McCall, a social worker for Voices from the Streets, a non-profit group assisting homeless kids that encourages involvement in the arts. When kids with a home confront homeless kids, McCall says they are often cruel.

"You couldn't go out (of the shelter) without people looking at you," recalls Charlene Williams, 13, who was homeless for two and a half years.

When Dionne Johnson, 13, was homeless, he said, "Kids used to mess with me and came up to me and wanted to fight me just because I was homeless."

Although Johnson didn't buckle under the pressure, many do, says McCall. "Every evening some children came into my office...Some were very ashamed of living in a shelter. I saw some families with five or six children saying they don't live in a shelter. The stigma can be horrible."

The precise number of homeless students in the region is hard to come by. Beverly Johnson, director of homeless education of the Washington, D.C. Public Schools, said her division serves more than 400 students. Nationally, 43 percent of the 500,000 homeless kids don't attend school regularly, according to the National Coalition on the Homeless.

It is also hard to define homeless teenagers, says Garlon Hall, head of Youth For Tomorrow New Life Center, an outreach program in Bristol, Va. "My definition of homeless is where the person has nowhere to go without government or church intervention. But then it's extended to teens: actions force them out of home, they may not be on a corner but they're living at a friend's house."

Fairfax County Public Schools have recently centralized school registration

and immunization efforts in a program, FOCUS, which lets parents register in their shelter instead of spending time and money going to offices across the country.

Fairfax also cuts some of the stigma by having buses pick up homeless kids first so no one sees them coming from or leaving the shelter, said Pamela Dunn, director of educational services at the Embury Rucker homeless shelter in Reston, Va.

The educational success of these kids depends on who you talk to. Social worker McCall says, "Kids from Voices From the Streets are honor roll students... my group did pretty well."

Yet Dunn, who primarily supervises elementary students, says, "Many of them are below grade level." Dunn cites many factors for this: families moving from shelter to shelter, and in certain cases, the parents' illiteracy.

Despite such coordinated efforts, major problems — especially transportation — still haunt homeless youth.

Dionne says he took four or five Metrobuses to get to school "out of my own pocket."

And Aubrey Powell, 13, who usually took two or three buses on his six-mile trek to school, was hit by a car on the way from his shelter while crossing the intersection labeled by the AAA as the most dangerous in the city. He suffered a broken thigh and missed at least five months of school.

The D.C. School Board considered sending bus service to his shelter, but last September cancelled all such plans.

Advocates of the homeless say public opinion is rising against them and yet more long-term solutions must be found. Says McCall, "(Mayor Sharon Pratt) Dixon is adding to public opinion (after dismissal of needed legislation Initiative 17) that says, 'We don't want to spend any more money on students. What are we going to do with homeless mothers? Kids that are living at laundromats and friend's houses?'"

Jonathon "Chip" Goines is a 10th grader at Thomas Jefferson High School in Virginia. He is managing editor of the Viewpoints section of *Young D.C.*, a member newspaper of Youth Communication network.



CHICAGO HOMELESS TEENS

A knock on the door came at 2 o'clock in the morning. "I opened the door and she's standing there," says Sandy Eddy, a case worker at Teen Living Programs, recalling the sight of a

homeless teenage girl. "She had tears rolling down her face, and she said, 'I wanna come home.' So I let her in."



Homeless teen Constance Jones, 18, ponders her future through a window at Teen Living Programs.

myself in this situation. I'm used to doing nothing and the results are nothing. That's me," he says.

Mosley turned to his friends, hopping from one house to the next until he ended up on the streets with other homeless teens, many of whom followed the same path he took.

"You go through all of your friends and families," says Eddy. Homeless teens "go stay with this friend a couple of weeks and, if you're lucky, a couple of months.

Once you learn you're not welcome there, you go someplace else."

Next stop: the streets, where the struggle for survival becomes more dangerous. Homeless teens often resort to panhandling, prostitution, or pornography for money.

To offer a safer path, Teen Living Programs, like other organizations, sends out its outreach team, SCORE (Street Choices Offered to Rehabilitate the Exploited).

"They just go out there and try to make connections with kids they see on the streets," says Eddy. They "talk with them, tell them what's available, offer them services in the street...passing out condoms, giving them referral services. The whole goal is to develop a relationship with them so that the kids trust them...so they can start turning their life around."

However, organizations like Teen Living Programs are scarce, and as the number of these teens increase, their future grows bleaker. Estimates of homeless teens in the Chicago area range from 10,000 to 100,000.

"The city doesn't feel any commitment to (anyone) under the age of 18," says Hind. Although Eddy has encountered a homeless child as young as 8, most are 16- to 18-year-olds.

Eddy said adult shelters do not house teens under 18. And those shelters don't offer 18-year-olds services like Teen Living Programs does, such as opportunities to live in foster homes and employment training.

"When you're that age you need an adult in your life," says Eddy. "You need a stable home, someplace that's nurturing, that's warm where you can grow."

- Shella Calamba
Lincoln Park

HOMELESS YOUTHS



ARE

"Shooting Back"

...WITH CAMERAS

EXHIBIT PHOTOS ARE SELF PORTRAITS

Cover photo by Shadonna (1989)
(Above) A teen is ready to "shoot back" at homelessness.
Photo by Daniel Hall, age 9. (1990)

Photos courtesy of "Shooting Back," Washington, D.C..

Chris Heflin, 10, liked playing best with his 8-year-old brother, Norman, on the railroad tracks behind the warehouse. They enjoyed finding rolls of red tape in the dump by the tracks, left over from nearby businesses that had shut down. They had playful fights by wrapping each other up in red tape. Other times they would use the tape to block entrances to the room that they lived in at the Carpenter Shelter.

Chris liked playing with Norman so much at the railroad tracks that he even took a picture of his brother standing there. Along with nearly 100 other photos taken by other homeless youths in the areas around Washington D.C., Chris' picture is a part of the "Shooting Back" exhibit at the Children's Express Museum.

The exhibit was first displayed in Washington D.C. and is now touring within the Children's Museum network around the country for three years. After Jan. 5, when the exhibit closes at the Children's Express Museum here in Chicago, "Shooting Back" will be going to Philadelphia.

The exhibit that took one and a half years to complete was the idea of Jim Hubbard, a photographer who at the time was with the United Press International (UPI).

"I was doing the things photojournalists do in Washington, covering the president, Congress, the Pentagon, and all of those things back in the early '80s," said Hubbard.

At one point he began to notice the many homeless people in Washington D.C. with their bags and shopping carts.

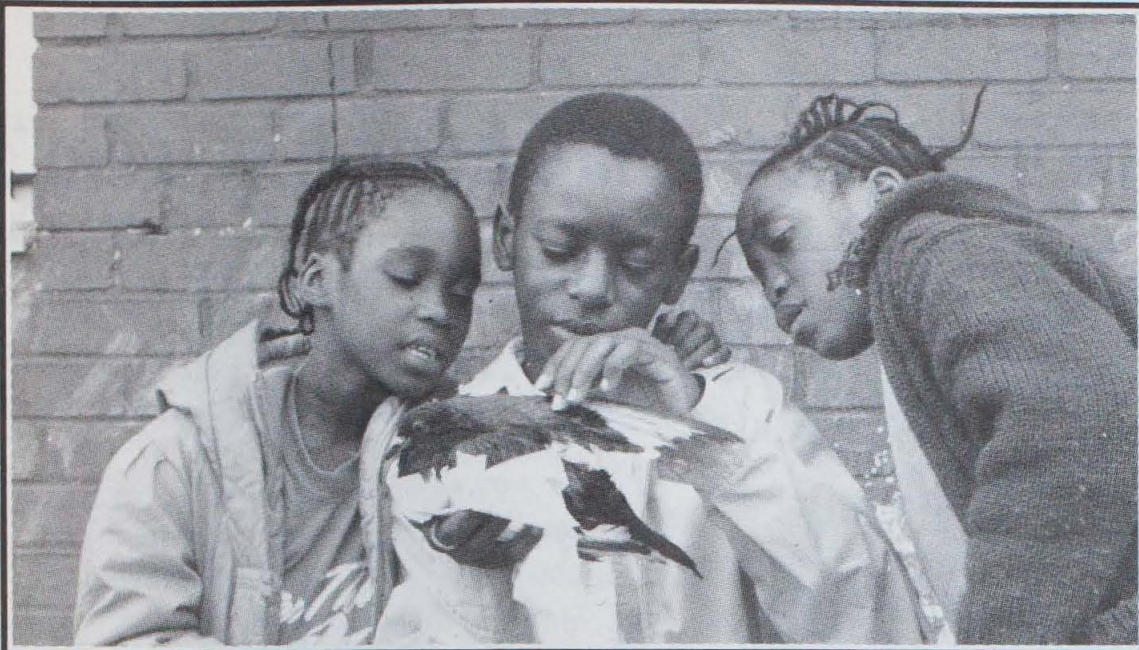
"At the same time, the President of the U.S., who at the time was Reagan, was saying there weren't any homeless people in the country. So I started taking pictures of them and got to know them," said Hubbard.

He published a book with those pictures and labeled the homeless people as American refugees. His global interest in homeless children developed as he traveled around the world for the UPI.

"As I got to know some of the children living in shelters, I was struck by the fact that they were just like the kids in India. They were locked out of the system," said Hubbard.

While visiting a homeless family living in a motel room, Hubbard noticed how one wall was covered with pictures children drew. Though financial instability kept the family far from living in comfort, Hubbard was impressed by how the mother displayed her children's art work in her own little gallery.

The idea for the "Shooting Back"



Two sisters and a brother share an injured pigeon's pain. Photo by Charlene Williams, age 11 (1990)

project grew from that visit. Instead of him documenting homeless youths, he wanted the homeless youths to take pictures of their everyday lives.

Chris and Norman's lives changed drastically for the worst when their father lost his job at a construction company. He couldn't pay the rent on their apartment, so he moved his family into the shelter.

The shelter where Chris and Norman lived was an old warehouse with four sections, with separate ones for families, single females, single males, and a control section for the homeless substance abusers needing more supervision.

"One Saturday, Jim came down (to

our room) and asked if we wanted to take pictures. We asked our mom and she said, 'Sure,'" said Chris, who was first attracted to the idea of having something to do on Saturdays. Now looking back, Chris admitted that the project has kept him out of trouble.

Before the project, "I kept on getting in trouble with the police and all that," he said. "I kept on stealing bikes. Everytime I did that I would get in trouble. There were kids who stole and they got me to do it for them."

While walking around the block with the camera, Norman likes to take pictures of "gross things" because he said they attract more attention. Norman and Chris both believe that

once they get the attention of others, they can then tell people with their pictures that even homeless kids can do things, if they are given the chance.

I feel pretty proud," said Chris, looking at his photographs framed on the wall, "because I think I can do things like that."

The black and white of the photos focuses on the drama behind each picture. In one photo, a boy holds a pigeon with a broken wing. His sister, who set the camera on a timer, is gritting her teeth, apparently feeling the pigeon's pain. In another picture, a homeless boy sits at the bottom of a stairwell, staring despondently out a window.

Chris and Norman's father has gotten another job, and since has moved his family back into an apartment. They have been touring with Hubbard to promote the project and have recently been in Paris. With big smiles, Norman commented that the fries in France were superior. Chris agreed.

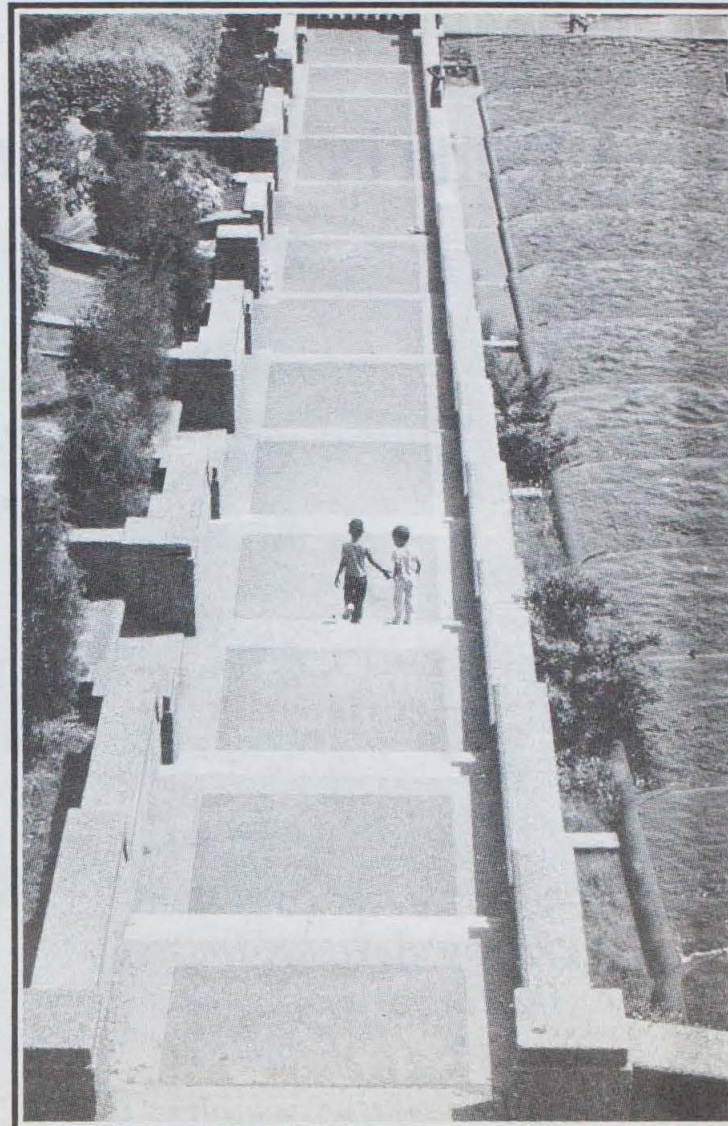
They (the youths) held up some of

the humanity that comes through in spite of circumstances...some of the joy that kids are always looking for in life and happiness," said Hubbard.

With help from foundations, businesses, and individuals who donated equipment, chemical supplies, and their time to serve as photo mentors, "Shooting Back" involved 200 to 300 youths from six shelters.

"It's an aggressive title. These are aggressive times," said Hubbard. "Kids should do something aggressive to society because it has done nasty jobs to them...the kids should be shooting back at us because of the world we have left them."

- Mai Dang
Von Steuben



Homeless teen Calvin Stewart, 17, spied these children playing at Malcolm X park in Washington, D.C.



Two children (above) get ready to use a shopping cart to race against an eager runner. Photo by Daniel Hall age 9, (1989) (Below) A family stays together even without a home. Photo by Yolanda, (1989)



Norman finds something interesting along the Washington, D.C. railroad tracks and Chris Heslin, age 9 captures the moment. (1990)

Are property values more important than homeless teens?



Illustration by Nico Berry, Kenwood

For a year and a half, the Northside Ecumenical Night Ministry has been working on opening a shelter for homeless youths, which will be called the Open Door Program. After a lot of planning and involvement in legalities to gain a shelter license, it is finally scheduled to open early 1992.

Linda Hart, project coordinator, explained the majority of the effort and time of the organization was spent on preparing a case to present to the Zoning Board of Appeals

to get permission for the use of the property on North Clark Street for the shelter. The ground work for the case included talking to surrounding businesses and residents to gain their support for the project.

Though mostly support was given to the shelter, opposition was also evident.

Several residents expressed that they did not want such a shelter in their community because it would attract undesirable young people, said Hart. They were afraid the youths would create problems with graffiti and vandalism. This then would lower their property values.

"Those aren't realistic fears," said Hart.

Not only are they unrealistic, they clearly show the insensitivity and ignorance of those residents. Without the proper assistance to get them back on track, the youths can more easily become "undesirable" when they have no other place to turn to but to gangs and other violent activities.

"... they did not want ... a shelter in their community. ... it would attract undesirable young people. ...

They were afraid the (homeless) youths would create problems with graffiti and vandalism. ... lowering their property values. ..."

Most homeless teens are not running to but rather from some place or thing. That place could be an abusive environment or one where they are neglected and uncared for. Some youths might be involved in relationships that have become unbearable with parents or other guardians. If those teens decide to leave home and give up the basic necessities of food and shelter, their drastic consequences of their actions can only be responses to drastic situations.

After running away from something and then deciding to run to help, it would be most damaging to them if no help is available.

It isn't society's responsibility to criticize the homeless for their condition because it does not show them how to make improvements. It isn't society's place to pretend to be oblivious to the problem, because that definitely does not contribute to the solution. When the homeless reach out for help, it is society's responsibility to reach back and

connect with them.

If these reasons fail to convince communities that more help is needed, maybe these numbers can. A study done by a governor's task force in 1985 concluded that there are 21,000 homeless youths in the state, almost half of which are in Chicago. Four thousand of them are under 18.

On the other end of the number line, there are only about 10 shelters in the city that assist homeless youths. The Open Door Program will possibly be the eleventh. This shelter will serve 16 teenagers at a time. It's a small number compared to how many homeless youths there are in the city, but it is a solid step toward helping the problem. Now let's see if we can take an unresisting leap.

- Mai Dang
Von Steuben

WHAT'S HAPPENING!!

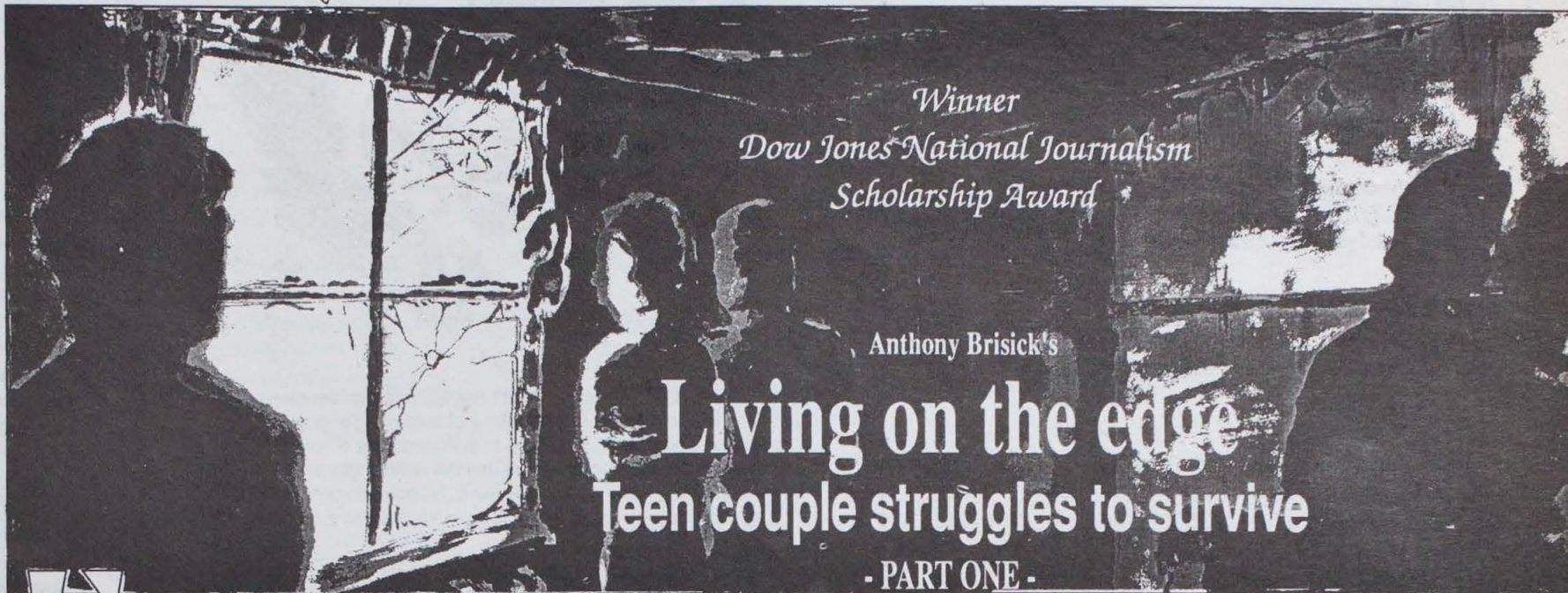
November 25 - December 31 "A Christmas Carol" presented by the Goodman Theatre at 200 S. Columbus Dr. Tickets range from \$20 - \$30. Performances are Mondays (12/23 & 12/30 only), Tuesdays (except 12/24 & 12/31), Wednesdays (except 12/25) at 7:30pm.; Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays (Except 12/29) at 8:00pm; and matinees on Mondays (12/23 & 12/30 only), Tuesdays (12/31 only), Wednesdays (12/27 only), and Thursdays (12/19 & 12/26 only) at 2 p.m.; and Saturdays (except 12/21) and Sundays at 2:30p.m. For further information call the Goodman box office at 443-3800.

December 23 (5:30pm). Stories for the Season. Shanta and Alice Rubio will share holiday tales. Through chants, songs, poetry, and stories, Shanta shares the cultural heritage of African people from the Caribbean, African-American, and African cultures. Alice Rubio tells an original "Urban Christmas Tale" combines images of Christmas past with Christmas present and celebrates the City of Chicago. Shanta is a member of the Association of Black Storytellers and The National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling (NAPPSA). (Chicago Public Library's Cultural Center 78 E. Washington.)

December 12-15. "Lighting the Path" presented by the Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago at the Katherine Dunham Theatre of Kennedy-King College, 6800 S. Wentworth Ave. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$6 for senior citizens and children under 12, except for Dec. 12 which is a benefit performance and tickets will cost \$25. Performance times are 8 p.m. on Dec. 12, 13, and 14, and 3 p.m. on the 15th. Muntu Dance Theater performs interpretations of African and African American dance. For tickets and further information, call 602-1135.

December 26 (5:30pm) The New Yam Festival DANCE PERFORMANCE, MUSIC & LECTURE. Darlene Blackburn Dancers explore the roots of Kwanzaa as they recreate "The New Yam Festival," a celebration of the harvest of new yams in the Southeastern state of Nigeria, West Africa. Performed and discussed pieces include "Ancestral Worship," "New Yam Song," and "Agbadza". Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday of first fruits, which comes directly out of the tradition of agricultural peoples of Africa who celebrate and give thanks for harvest. "The New Yam Festival," as well as Kwanzaa, lasts for seven days. (Cultural Center 78 E. Washington.)

For more holiday spirit, check out pages 8 to 9!



Winner
Dow Jones National Journalism
Scholarship Award

Anthony Brisick's

Living on the edge

Teen couple struggles to survive

- PART ONE -

Illustration by Ben Nuñez, UIC

While the local mouse dines from the dog's food bowl, the one coat of off-white paint fights to overcome the cell block orange's control of the wall, and the aroma from each room brings another level of nausea. You try to make yourself comfortable on the paper-thin couch cushions, hoping not to let on that you want to scream in horror because one of the native insects (a roach) just jitterbugged on your hand, right before your host just politely swatted it with his bare hand instinctively.

These customs are new for a teen-aged couple who recently have gone from living on Chicago's West side to its lower South side, from open windows and locks, to bars and gates.

Everything in this couple's environment is new for them, except for the

question of 'why?' that never seems to change.

The tenants of this abode are the couple — Larry* and Liz* — and a silent giant named Dennis, an illegal roommate who stays there to help pay the rent.

Even though the apartment has an empty, abandoned feel to it — its only furnishings are two love seats found in the alley and a weight bench used also as a two-in-one table/seat set — it is overwhelmingly crowded, with Larry, Liz, Dennis, their two dogs Princess and Hooch, and their two babies Amie* and Larry Jr.* "We all manage to get along by shifting at the right time, and juggling our possessions," said Liz.

Larry is 18, a high school dropout who hasn't worked for the past year or so. He says, "I got on public aid hoping that one of their job programs for youths would get me somewhere, but recently they have been cancelled along with medical care cuts, and I'm worried about how I'm going to keep the kids up with their shots."

"They never think about the children that depend on this stuff to survive. They just presume that everybody on aid is lazy and just gets on aid because they don't feel like working. I want to work, I'm tired of being poor."

Liz, 17, is also a high school dropout, but plans to return to school as soon as possible. "I'm the pants in the family," she says. "I pay the bills, I do the house work, and I take care of the children most of the time."

Larry interrupts quickly, saying, "But I make up most of the rules, like she can't go out after dark."

"He worries too much," says Liz, "especially since that one guy got shot down the street not too long ago."

When they first moved they believed that they were more open with other people. Now they agree that they live like hermits. Every now and then they go to the store, and maybe a movie if they save up enough money.

"Our biggest thrill of the day is usually waking up," says Larry.

Larry and Liz met at a church camp the summer of 1987. Back then, Larry had a smooth, unlined face, jet-black hair, and a toothy, crooked smile. At 5-foot-8, Liz was well-built and had an easy-going nature.

Today, Larry dyes his graying hair, has new lines in his face and bleeding gums due to lack of dental care. Liz has not lost the weight she gained from her pregnancies. What she has lost is her easygoing nature. Tense, she often snaps at others' behavior.

Larry Jr. is 2 months old, and Amie is 18 months. "Larry Jr. almost never cries, which is rare for a newborn, but Amie cries about every single thing, even when she's happy," says Larry, sighing and looking at the ceiling.

"I guess they're OK, at least for now, but I'm afraid that if they don't have any physical diseases, they might get caught by some of these other diseases — like drugs and gangs."

Dennis almost never speaks, except for an unexpected occasional joke. "We're amazed every time he moves, let alone speaks. We've asked him questions, but all we get is a despondent stare," says Larry.

"Once for some reason he did tell us a little bit about himself, like he was married but his wife died, and his daughter kicked him out, so he's been living at shelters and receiving checks from the state (they don't know why yet)." The two dogs are for protection, they're too small right now to do anything, but at least they bark a lot, and that's some help," says Liz. "The reason we need protection is because lately a few of the apartments in the building were broken into. The building is getting worse, even though I didn't think it was possible."

"The other day I saw this guy pissing in the hallway downstairs. And drug dealers seem to love it in this building, because they'll be here all day selling to all these addicts and s—."

The building is a four-story, U-shaped complex. The front door has been closed for about eight months because of building problems, so tenants have to walk through the alley to the back steps. "The alley stinks, and our windows are right over it," says Larry.

"At night," he continues, "all the corners have gang members on them and all you hear is M.F. this and b— that, you can look out the window and watch the police drive by a drug sale scared half to death. The lady next door is always getting beat up by her pimp, or somebody she picked up. The people across the way walk around buck-naked at night, and believe me it isn't pretty."

END PART ONE...
SEE JANUARY'S NE FOR PART TWO

* Not their real names

horoscope

By Jolie Nean Nicola, Morgan Park

Aries (March 21-April 19)

Mystery, intrigue and glamour are highlighted. Emphasize excitement; change your daily routine and put a little spice in your life. Fun awaits you with a Pisces.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You should deal with practical matters right now. A love relationship with a Capricorn is strong despite a recent dispute. You have the strength and patience to make it work.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

This is a perfect time to make friends and voice your opinions. An Aquarian will help spread your thoughts around school. You will be the center of attention.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You will be attracted to a Leo. You will receive compensation for something that you have a strong talent in. Be aware...you should not travel at this time.

Leo (July 23-August 22)

You need to use your time constructively. Take advantage of any opportunity that comes your way, something good might be the result. This is a great time for progress.

Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Reality hits home base! A Taurus and Scorpio shed new light on a situation that was bothering you. Be careful because this is a time of negativity. But do not fear because things will get better soon.

Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your social life heightens. This is a great time for parties, plays, and experimenting. Go out and buy new clothes. People are going to be amazed at how beautiful you look.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Communication is a problem for you at this time. Overcome this obstacle by writing a poem or an essay. There are a lot of writing contests to enter and you might even get a scholarship out of it!

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Be objective at all times- do not judge a book by its cover. You might just fall for the person that you least expected. A long term goal will be accomplished during December.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your emotions are being tested right now but it will all be over soon. This is the time that rewards will be received. A Cancer will play an outstanding role with your achievements.

Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Contact a distant relative, they will be happy to hear from you. Your emotions do not allow you to view things clearly. A Scorpio will help you gain control of your feelings.

Pisces (February 19-March 20)

A friend is very demanding of your time right now. Let go of this relationship. You do not need any extra burdens. Break loose and have fun!

COMIC My Christmas List



Illustration by Ben Nuñez, UIC

Ho, Ho, Ho! Open up yo' do! Its me, NE's comic connoisseur here for another month's dose of medicine for all you readers. This month, I'm going to do something different, seeing that December 25 is the day the chubby guy in red goes sprinkling gifts all over the world. I'm going to print the letter that I sent to good ol' St. Nick, in its entirety. Enjoy.

Dear Santa, I have pretty much everything a guy could want. However, I wish you would make these meager suggestions a reality in the world of comics.

Kill Cyclops and Marvel Girl. Their contributions to the X-Men are meager, at best, and Cyclops's constant whining makes me sick.

Bring Jubilee back to the X-Men. They were a teenage team when they started out. They need a fresh face.

Make the Joker do something that's cruel to Commissioner Gordon's family. It's about time the old coot had a nervous breakdown and retired.

Give The Psycho and Lobo their own series. They're the best thing to come out of DC Comics in a long time.

Let Myxlpik fight Superman again. I know he's a stupid villain, but what the hell, he was funny. Give The Avengers (both East and West) some REAL heroes. They've become real stale, real fast. Toss Quasar, The Vision, Sersi,

Thor, Hawkeye, and USAgent in favor of Punisher, Spider-Man, Ghost-Rider, Moon Knight, Foolkiller, and Deathlok. Y'know, shake up the status quo.

Let all of the psychos in Arkham Asylum (a.k.a. Joker, Riddler, Scarecrow, Penguin, Two-Face) escape at once. It would be interesting to see how Batman handles it.

Make Terminator and Predator worth the \$2.50 Dark Horse charges.

Leave Guido's of X-Factor code name Strong Guy. It's sooo un-superhero. I love it!

Bring Robotech back to T.V. I want to see how it ends (for those of you who didn't know, Robotech was originally planned to be a three-part series, like Star Wars)

Give us one more "Killer Tomato" movie.

One last thing, Santa. Please spread peace throughout the land and give hope to the less fortunate.

Sincerely Yours,

James Lafayette Alsup III

That's it for this month. Be back next month when I look at a certain two-ton green monster from a certain West Coast town that lost the NBA finals to a certain city that has a certain football team coached by a certain Mike Ditka. I'm talkin' about... Da Hulk

- James L. Alsup III
Whitney Young



Christmas

While you're browsing through stores and buying gifts this Christmas, you may want to give a gift to someone you don't know - and it won't cost you a dime. Spending some time with a senior citizen or homeless child can make their Christmas special.

Many organizations require teens to be at least 18 to volunteer and many hospitals, like Children's Memorial, have waiting lists for volunteers but there are still many groups that would appreciate your help.

"It's a great opportunity for teens to get involved and find out what Christmas is all about," said Tanya Mitchell of the Chicago Department of Aging. What Mitchell is talking about is the Department of Aging's volunteer program called "Light Up Chicago" in which volunteers can deliver meals.

How to "over Ch

Are you confused on how to have real Christmas fun? Well, you've come to the right source... That's right, little 'ol me. I'm going to tell you some toasty tips on how to have a wacky-wild-kooky-nutty Christmas break. So, kick up your heels and take a walk through my winter wonderland.

First, you need to devise a schedule. Plan to spend each day with a friend that you consider fun. Filter people like water-drain out those friends that freeze up. It's not too fun hanging around with an ice cube or someone that is at the tip of an iceberg.

Next, plan events with him or her. Consider things like...

- Making a Christmas movie with your friends as the stars. Consider calling it "It's a Crummy Life".
- Plan a day to make cookies with

Volunteers

and visit senior citizens during the holidays. Teens are also eligible for this program and can call Alexandra Lyons at 744-5795 to get involved.

The Salvation Army has numerous programs in need of volunteers. Packing food baskets, answering phones, reading programs, Christmas kettles, Woodfield Mall Gift Wrap Program, and the Children's Civic Celebration (gifts for inner city kids) all are open for teen volunteers. For further information contact the Salvation Army Volunteer Office at 725-1100.

Churches, nursing homes, orphanages, and the YMCA in your neighborhood may also welcome holiday visitors or helpers.

- Kristen Petrillo
Lane Tech

Chill" out Christmas

your friends. This is a perfect opportunity for a food fight.

- Spend the day enjoying the weather. Go snowboarding, ice-skating, skiing, sledding, or tobogganing.
- Have a Christmas masquerade party and go out trick-or-treating with your friends afterward.
- Have a video marathon. See how many movies you can watch in one day.

Well, troopers, these are a few things that will help you make your way through the winter zone. If you want to sit back and relax or go tobogganing with your friends, you still need to heat up your life a little during the frigid winter months.

- Jolie Nicola
Morgan Park

Going beyond the sugar cookies and popcorn

GIVE FOOD GIFTS THIS SEASON WITH AN INTERNATIONAL FLAVOR

*This holiday season,
save on cash and
spend some
imagination by giving
food as gifts. While
you're at it, spice up
that covered dish by
using one of the listed
ethnic recipes.*

Spring Egg Rolls

(Filipino)* 

Ingredients

- Two lbs. ground pork
 - 1/2 lb. shrimp, cooked
 - 1/4 lb. dried shrimps
 - Six stalks of celantro
 - Four cups shredded cabbage
 - 1/2 of whole singkamas (jicamas), about 1 lb. chopped
 - 1 medium-sized carrot, chopped
 - Two cloves of garlic
 - 1/2 cup of chopped onions
 - A pinch of MSG
 - Salt to taste
 - Three cups of water
 - 24 spring roll or egg roll wrappers
- (Chop singkamas, carrots and onions the same size, about 1/8 in. square or smaller)

Instructions

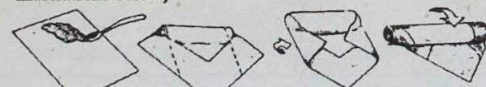
Boil ground pork with water and simmer until all water evaporates. Skim the fat from the ground pork. Add two cups of water and simmer until the ground pork will cook and soften. Set aside.

Saute or brown the garlic in the skillet along with the chopped onions.

Put all the ground pork with the browned garlic and onions and stir for 10 minutes.

Put the shrimp all together with the chopped carrots and stir for three minutes. Then put the cabbage and the singkamas. Season with salt.

Wrap 1-2 tablespoons of the mixture in each spring roll wrapper, fold and roll firmly. (see illustrations below)



Fry until golden brown. Serve hot with sweet and sour sauce.

* Source - somebody's mother (but we'll never tell whose!) Illustrations by Mei Moy, Whitney Young

Banana Fritters

(Chinese)*

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups of all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon of baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup water
- 4 firm bananas or platanos
- 3 cups vegetable oil
- Vanilla ice cream optional

Instructions

Combine 1 cup of the flour, baking powder, soda and salt in large bowl. Gradually blend in water, beating with a whisk until smooth.

Peel bananas, and cut crosswise into three pieces, to make 12 pieces. Coat bananas lightly with remaining 1/2 cup flour.

Heat oil in wok over medium-high heat until

temperature reaches 375 degree F. Dip banana segments in flour-water mixture until completely coated.

Cook 4 to 6 banana pieces at a time in the oil until pieces are golden (three to five minutes). Drain on absorbent paper. Can serve with ice cream. Makes about 4 servings.

* Source — Chinese Cooking by the Editors of Consumer Guide

Puto

(Filipino Rice Cakes)*

Ingredients

- 2 cups rice, soaked and ground with 1 1/2 cup water
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Instructions

Add to the ground rice the sugar, salt and baking powder. Mix thoroughly. Pour into puto molds (or mini cupcake molds) until each is 2/3 full.

Arrange in a steamer and steam for 1/2 hour or until done. Insert a toothpick in each and if it comes out (clean) dry, the puto is done. Serve with grated coconut or butter.

* Source - the mother strikes again!

Beef Stroganoff

(Soviet Union)*

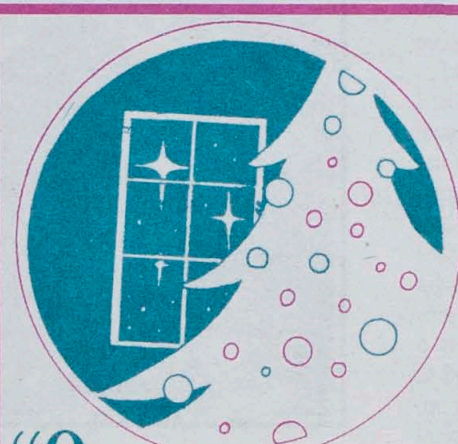
Ingredients

- 2 onions, coarsely chopped
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 4 tablespoons flour
- 1 cup beef broth or bouillon
- dry mustard. Salt. lemon juice
- 1/2 to 1 cup thick sour cream
- 4 oz. mushrooms, sliced and lightly browned in butter
- 2 gherkins, finely sliced
- 1 lb. beef sirloin or tenderloin
- 3 tablespoons butter

Instructions

Cook chopped onion in butter in a heavy saucepan until golden. Stir in flour, then broth; cook and stir until mixture comes to boiling; cook 5 minutes longer. Stir in mustard, salt, and lemon juice. Blend in sour cream. Add sliced mushrooms and gherkins and bring just to boiling. Cut meat into serving-sized pieces or long narrow strips and quickly brown in remaining butter in a skillet. Meat should be pink inside. Combine sauce with browned meat and heat to serving temperature (do not boil). If desired, tomato wedges may be added to sauce. Serve with fried potatoes, cooked noodles, rice, or bread dumplings.*

*Source - The World's Best 100 Recipes by Roland Gook



*"On the first day of Christmas
my true love gave to me; a
partridge in a pear tree."
If partridges and pear trees
aren't on your holiday shopping
list, Santa's elves at New
Expression have drummed up a
few ideas to fill your stockings
this season without leaving you
out in the cold.*

*Holiday cookies, like
gingerbread men, are tasty gifts
that are easy to make.*

*Fill a photo album with old
photographs, cards, and other
memorabilia and give it to a
friend. Or record your friend's
favorite songs on a tape for them.*

*Decorate a plain T-shirt or hat
with fabric paints found in fabric
stores. Buy a plain picture frame
and personalize it with paints,
glitter, fabric, or beads.*

*Buy a small cross-stitch kit and
make an ornament with your
friend's name on it.*

*Oh, and while you're stitching
your friend's name in their gift,
you might as well add your own
initials. When you're rich and
famous, your friends can have
something to prove they knew
you back when....*

- Kristen Petrillo
Lane Tech

Illustrations by Rugen Reyes

Math and Science Academy: Rigorous home away from home



Many people think of high school as a waste of time, memorizing terms and formulas never to be used again.

But the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) has vowed to change that. The Aurora, Ill.-based school is the only U.S. three-year public residential high school. Students, tested for entry in eighth grade or freshman year, pay about \$600 to attend; the state pays the rest. About six years old, IMSA was formed to develop intellectual potential, academic achievement, and creativity.

Many IMSA students come from Chicago, and notice interesting differences and similarities between IMSA and their former schools.

The academy is supposedly more stressful than a normal high school since students live away from home. Since the academic program is said to be rigorous, most students agree that they would have done just as well if not better at their former schools.

Yet, "I'm glad that I took the opportunity to attend the academy," said Alaina Anderson, formerly of Morgan Park.

Although Anderson is satisfied, some students feel they expected too much from IMSA. "I'm disappointed with IMSA," said Andre Bailey, formerly of the Ted Leonard Regional Gifted Center, and a 1991 IMSA graduate. "I would probably have been more comfortable at home." Like

Bailey, living away from home is not ideal for every teen, and is only one sacrifice IMSA students make.

Elizabeth Pine, formerly of the University of Chicago Lab School, said she doesn't even have time to read a book for fun. "I've had more stress here. I question whether a lot of what I went through is worth it. I'm only 15; I'm not supposed to go through this yet. I have a headstart, but I lost some time."

Others are thankful for so many opportunities. Mentorship is a special aspect of IMSA. In the optional program, students work with a researcher or professor to learn about 'real' research.

Meredith Gonzales, formerly of Good Counsel, said her physiology research project at the Loyola Maywood Medical Center gave her "a feeling for the different areas in biology and laboratory work."

Gregory Draves, formerly of Lane Tech and a '91 IMSA graduate, said he got more opportunities at IMSA. "The classes are more advanced and specialized. Chicago Public School classes are very broad-based."



IMSA students measure electromagnetic radiation level for a class research project in Science, Society and the Future.

"I wouldn't have read the range of selections in English. IMSA's got me more prepared than any other place would have," said John Hanson, formerly of Lincoln Park and a 1991 IMSA graduate.

Electives at IMSA include Pathogenic Microbiology, Facets of Thermodynamics, Images of Horror, Differential Equations, Jewelry Making and Metals, and Russian.

Vincent Schleitwiler, formerly of

Lincoln Park, says his old program was based more on work than the discussion-based IMSA classes, which he enjoys even though he feels there's not enough emphasis on humanities.

Each student must also complete three hours of work service weekly, ranging from cafeteria work to experience in biology or computers. To graduate, students must also complete 80 hours of community service in the state of Illinois. Students have volunteered at hospitals, libraries, museums or special camps. "I learned a lot of things in work service and community service," Draves said.

As its students graduate, IMSA aims for them to "demonstrate a sense of

social awareness and responsibility." But Pine said some students at IMSA are apathetic. "I feel so isolated here — I can't care for the rainforests." At her former school, most students were concerned about environmental and social issues. Maybe that was because they were near the University of Chicago. "They were much more socially progressive," Pine said.

However, Bailey said, "Kids are coming here (IMSA) and acting like

they're on a college campus. But they're just human beings away from home. People here are scared of each other." As a result, he feels there are more cliques at the academy than other Chicago high schools.

Also, "IMSA loses in the social aspect. There should be a balance between academics and social life. We need to get out more, away from Aurora," said Sophia Williams, formerly of Whitney Young.

Yet "Social life here can be tempting. You're living next door to friends — some people don't take advantage of it and some take too much advantage," Anderson said.

Is there potential for success, considering the need for a balance between the social and academic aspects of a tough IMSA life? Draves feels he was successful, partly because of his counselors, teachers, and resident counselors. "Having a community means everybody helps everybody out."

But Schleitwiler said, "some people really aren't happy here. That's why there are some discipline problems."

But some have replaced a negative attitude with a positive one. Bailey wishes he was one of those. "I wish I would have tried to convince myself that this is the best place for me. I would have been much more successful," he said.

- Sonia Lal

Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy

Illustration by Andre Matos, Aspira



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Teen Living Programs (for homeless youth):

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Rootless teenagers Foster care teaches endurance

Children sometimes take for granted that they live with their natural parents. Some complain because they have to share their room with their younger sister or brother.

Or maybe their parents won't buy them the \$100 pair of jeans they want.

Or their parents might need them to actually start working so they can buy some of the things they want.

But what they fail to realize is that around 23,000 children in Illinois alone don't even reside with their natural parents or families. Instead, they are living with total strangers and are forced to adapt to whatever environment they are placed in.

Carla Mosely, a 14-year-old at Julian High School, is a ward of the state. This means that the Department Children Family Services (DCFS) has a file on her, provides her with DCFS case worker, and a place to live. She lives with her foster family, the Johnsons, whom she likes very much. Mosely says, "They are the nicest," of the four families with whom she has lived. The worst foster "were negative, always yelling, and they wanted me to clean the house a lot."

Mosely, who was neglected by her parents and became a ward of the state at age 6, said, "I want to live with my sisters." She has two sisters and one brother. "I sometimes feel alone."

Ben Mecklanberg, a 15-year-old at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, is a foster child who is determined to succeed. Mecklanberg is an A and B student and some day wants to work in law or as an FBI agent. He has two brothers and two sisters who have all been in the DCFS system.

Mecklanberg has been a ward of the state since age 5, and since that age has been in nine foster care placements. "It's hard to relate to other people," he said, because he has moved to nine different areas and schools. His best friend is his former foster brother Scott.

Mecklanberg said he has been verbally abused by some of his foster parents, but he is very happy with his current placement, the Adams family. He has lived with them for nearly a year. His experiences, he says, have "made me more mature." When he

he or she is only supposed to have 20. These figures mean overloaded foster homes, shelters, temporary placements and even some hospitals, which causes problems for children desperately needing services.

Each foster home is allowed a certain number of children, depending on home size, age range of children in the foster home, and number of care takers.

Schneidman feels that "Some of them (children) do and some of them don't" have emotional problems. "They might be carrying around a more emotional baggage than most of us," says Schneidman.

Donna Petras, a chief officer of foster care says foster kids "have more maturity in coping skills," but are not educationally or socially advanced.

DCFS's first priority is to place the foster child with relatives. If that can't happen, then the next step is finding a foster home. If a home is not available then he/she would be placed in an institution (shelter or group home).

Out of the 23,000 foster children, 10,000 are in foster homes. Nine thousand are with their extended natural families and 9,000 are in institutions.

DCFS provides money for food, clothes, spending money, and transportation. The state will pay partial costs for qualified youth to attend college. Twenty-five scholarships were given from DCFS in 1991, according to Schneidman.

"Foster care is a lot like a democracy. It's not the best environment but we do our best," says Schneidman.

- Melody Negron
Gage Park

**"Around 23,000
children in
Illinois alone
don't reside with
their natural
parents."**

has children of his own, "I will treat them nicely and give them a nice family environment." He doesn't want his children to have to "sit and wonder how it would be with a real family," like he has done.

DCFS offers shelters, foster homes and temporary placements. If children don't have a place to go or their parents or families can't provide for them, then it's DCFS's job.

DCFS workers say social workers and other DCFS employees are overloaded. Out of about 23,000 Illinois children involved with DCFS, DCFS Public Information Officer Dave Schneidman said the average worker has about a 50-child case load, when

Occupational Therapist

Occupational therapists are very important people in the lives of persons who live with health problems such as Cerebral Palsy, Stroke, Spinal Cord injury, Muscular Dystrophy and Mental Illness, to name a few. Occupational therapists help people develop or regain the skills needed to learn, play, earn a living, and to achieve their maximum level of independence.

There is currently a critical shortage of occupational therapy practitioners, and according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of available positions is expected to double by the year 2000.

Educational requirements for the occupational therapist is a four-year bachelors degree in an accredited occupational therapy program. The occupational therapy assistant requires a two-year associates degree.

To learn more about this exciting career, or other health-related careers, return this form.



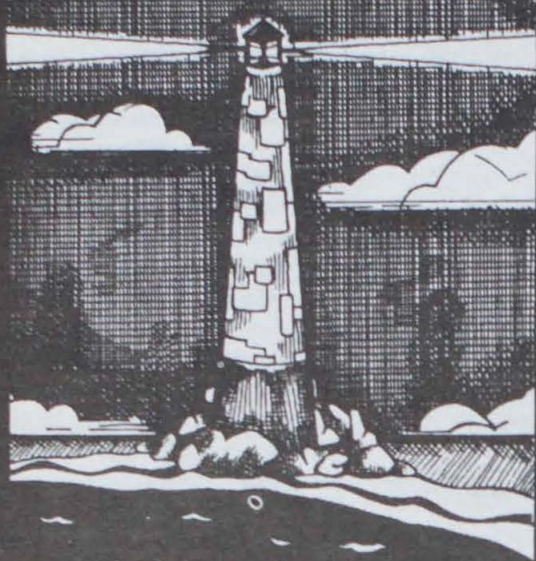
Jamee Heelan, occupational therapist from the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, is teaching a pediatric patient manual dexterity.

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YOUNG Chicago



Foggy Sight of a Lonely Seeker

Foggy sight of a lonely seeker

In the frozen night along the sea.

Waves of memories and tears sweet as

Dew rip the searching heart, dim the soul.

Shivering through the gust of wind,

Feeling the deadly sand under

Naked feet.

Hellish whispers lost at Sea.

Raise his hands toward heaven and

Gives an inner scream to the lighthouse.

- Rowena Cadiz

SOLUTIONS

If peace stands for Brotherhood,

then let it be an entity

If a rainbow brings joy,

then let it reach through infinity

If a suffering is a cure,

then let there be no pain

If a touch could make me love,

then touch me once again

If learning helps you to see,

then follow your dream

If freedom could make a sound,

then let it ring

If a follower wants to be a leader,

then let him teach

If emotions have a destiny,

then let them reach.

But if materialism should lead to hate,

let there be no path to see

And if killing has to be a remedy,

then let this be the end of me

No more solutions

- India Dennis
Steinmetz Academy



Shadow Where I Stand

All alone I was walking
On a dark and empty street.
And then suddenly I heard
The sound of another set of feet.

And then in the back of my mind
I began to wonder who it could be,
Walking this desolate street.
Perhaps they were lonely like me.

But as I began to walk faster,
So did the steps in front of me.
And then to my amazement I began to hear,
The same set of steps behind me.

Then I quickly came to a steady halt
And decided to see who could be near.
I searched behind me in the distance
And the shadow of a young woman came to appear.

I soon felt myself being watched also,
And I then turned to the opposite direction.
And there I saw a shining light
And my face with a frightening expression.

I then turned back the other way,
And it all came very clear to see.
But the one thing I couldn't figure,
Was if I was running to or away from me.

- Jessica Brown
Kenwood

Illustration by Mel Moy, Whitney Young

Illustration by Robert English, Jones

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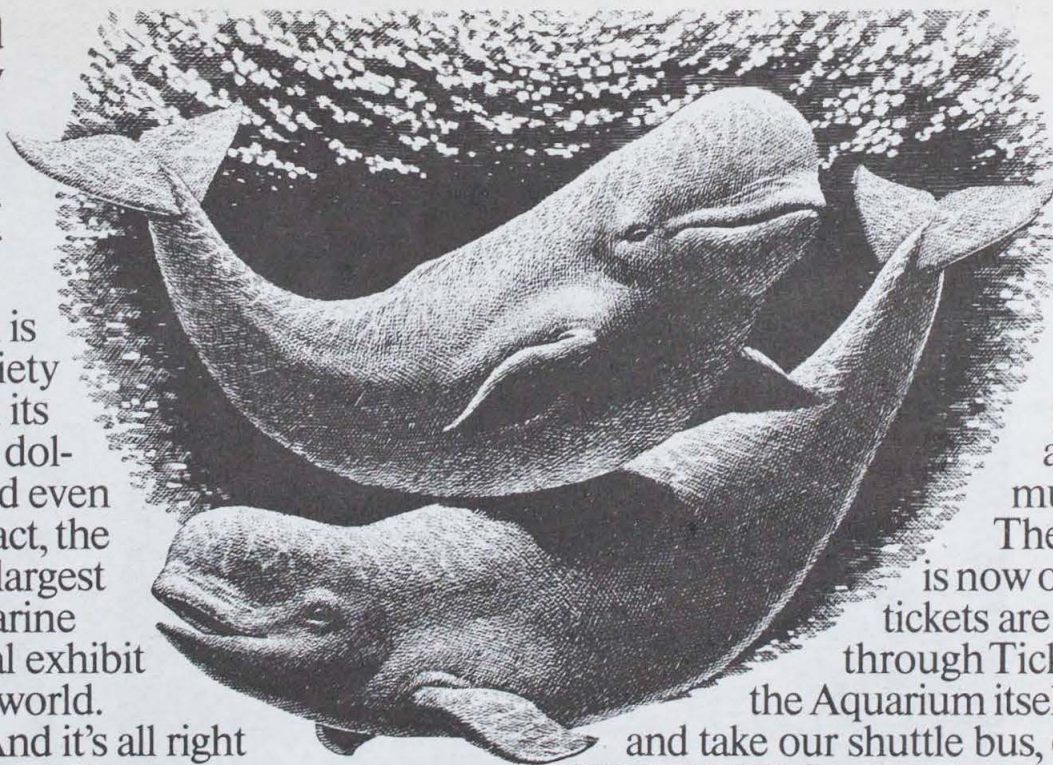
The Oceanarium is home to a wide variety of marine life, from its delicate sea stars to dolphins, sea otters, and even beluga whales. In fact, the Oceanarium is the largest indoor marine mammal exhibit in the world.

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Inside the Oceanarium's 170,000 square-foot structure, visitors can view these graceful creatures from both above and below the water's

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The Aquarium's researchers have also brilliantly



re-created the rugged shores of the Pacific Northwest—its huge rock formations and trees, its coves and inlets. There's even a Pacific rain forest and beaches, complete with a small tide pool teeming with sea anemones, crabs and mussels.

The Oceanarium is now open daily, and tickets are available only through Ticketmaster and

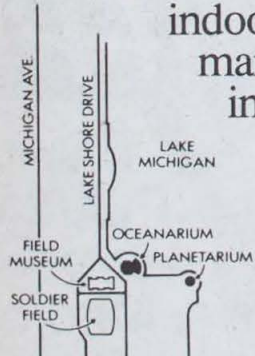
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"Imajica" Barker's best work



Clive Barker's latest novel, "Imajica" proves itself as one of his best works yet. An ambitious book of epic proportions, "Imajica" brings back the sheer terror Barker fans are used to.

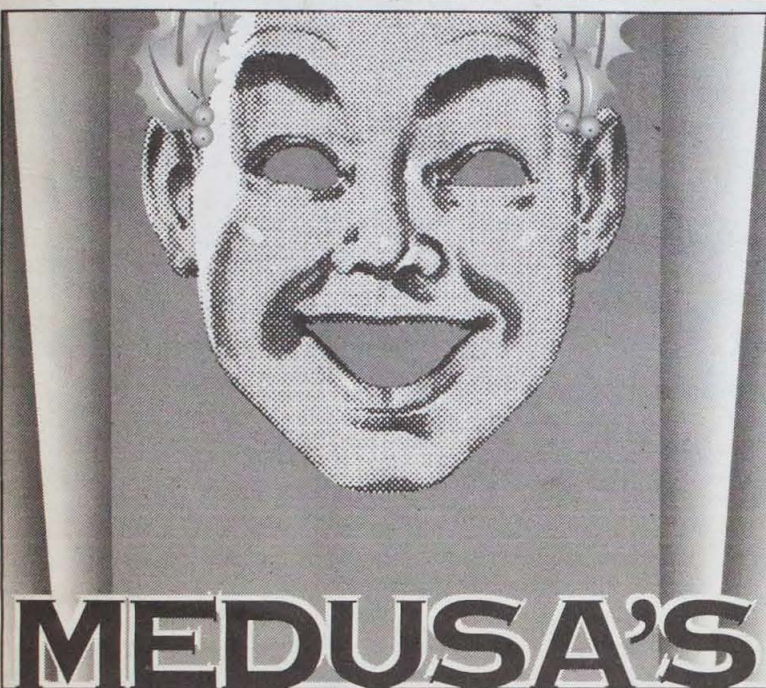
According to the novel, the Imajica represents five Dominions or worlds, the fifth one Earth. The one element joining these five worlds is magic. Earth, however, is exempt of magic, its followers considered insane. The Reconciliation surges as the effort of leaders of the Imajica to unite Earth with the rest of the Dominions.

The story revolves around Gentle and Jude, two Earthlings who become involved with Pie 'Oh' Pah, an androgyny of sorts. Pie's gender varies as each individual observes it, based on the observer's memories. Together, they join forces against the Tabula Rasa, a society devoted to keep Earth pure of magic.

Barker blends unadulterated horror with dark fantasy overtones. The storyline is very intricate, but free of loopholes. Clive Barker develops characters with incredible depth, never making them predictable.

"Imajica" is definitely a page-turner despite its 824-page length. Barker's writing reads almost like poetry, but never becomes too abstract. For those who have encountered Barker's psychedelic breed of horror before, I strongly recommend this novel. As for those looking for a taste of good horror fiction, "Imajica" is the recommended dosage.

- Cesar Torres
Lane Tech



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FOOD Cheap Chinese Chow FAST FOOD CRAZE

Photo illustration by Susana Muñoz, Lane Tech



Fast Chinese food is the perfect idea for the teen at work.

Hamburgers, pizza, tacos....sure they're fast, tasty, and cheap, but don't you ever get the feeling that there's something more to the world of fast food that's beyond the golden arches?

I know I did, and I discovered that man (or woman) does not have to live on Big Macs alone, even if you're on a tight budget.

Word on the streets is that fast food Chinese is the in thing now, with tons of little restaurants popping up all over the place. Here are the three best places I've found so far, with food to fit all palates, and prices to fit all pocketbooks.

Hunan Garden; 432 W. Diversey Pwy. #477-500

Crisp vegetables, fresh meats, generous portions, a cheery atmosphere, and great service all for under \$4...is this possible?

It is if you go to Hunan Szechwan Garden, one of the best of the new fast food Chinese restaurants. Serving everything from chow mein to lo mein, their seafood dishes are particularly good, featuring some of the freshest shrimp a person can get without wading out into a stream with hipboots and a net. I recommend the Potstickers, (small fried dumplings) or Eggdrop Soup for an appetizer, and the Garlic Shrimp or any Moo Shu-style meal as an entrée.

Mark's Chop Suey; 3343 N. Halstead #281-9090; 2901 N. Broadway #525-6677

For those of you with a big appetite and/or a sensitive palate, (or stomach), Mark's Chop Suey just might be the place for you. Specializing in the meat-and-potatoes of Chinese food, (chop suey and chow mein), they make the kinds of oriental meals we grew up on. Mark's uses spices only to highlight the food, and allow the natural flavors to come through. Like every restaurant reviewed here, the half-portion sizes are quite enough, (in this case more than enough), so on your next date be extra frugal and order the full-size portion to share. This way, you'll not only have enough money for a movie afterward, you won't have to degrade yourself the next day by begging your folks for enough cash to get you through the week. Recommended: the Fried Wonton appetizer and the Curry Chicken.

Shanghai Minnies; 2856 N. Broadway #348-4900

This is the place to go when you want spicy, great tasting Chinese for very little money. The service here is very good and for a couple dollars more you can dine in the much more elegant atmosphere of Minnie's Garden, located right above the general take-out/eat-in area.

Shanghai Minnies definitely has the spiciest food of the three restaurants, so if you don't feel up to the challenge, I'd suggest you order something in a lobster or a white sauce. Otherwise your best bet is an eggroll for the appetizer, the Governor Shrimp or Chicken for the entrée, and a big glass of water for an emergency.

- Sabrina Ann Esbitt
Lincoln Park



Photo illustration by Susana Muñoz, Lane Tech

Forget T.V. dinners -- the fast food craze brings Chinese food home.

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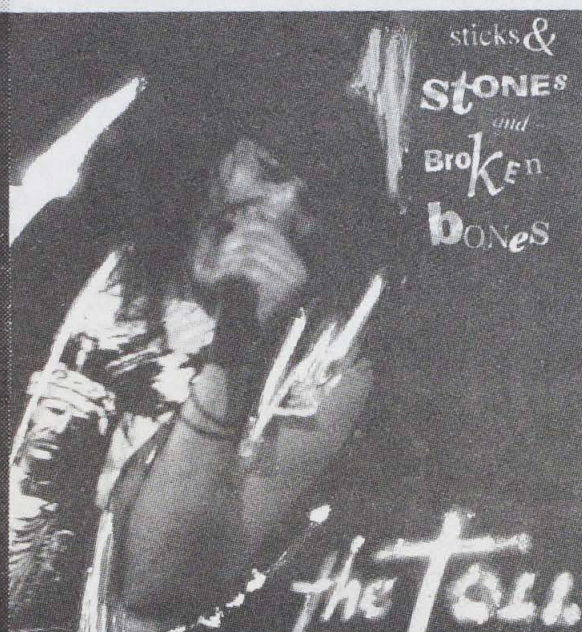
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Toll's latest takes its toll on listener

★★



The Toll is a four-man group from Columbus, Ohio. Their second release, "Sticks & Stones and Broken Bones," takes you on a bumpy ride through 12 nauseating songs.

This recording is typical of every hard rock album. There is nothing different or unique about it. This group will be far behind the groups Aerosmith and Guns N' Roses because of its lack of originality. Heavy guitar solos and loud drum beats combined with a piercing voice gives you a 'Faith No More' copycat group.

In a recent interview of the Toll by New Expression, the group was asked if they thought their album will be a success. Brad Circone, the lead vocalist, said "Who in the f— knows about success."

Well, I think they should care about success, because it won't come with this CD.

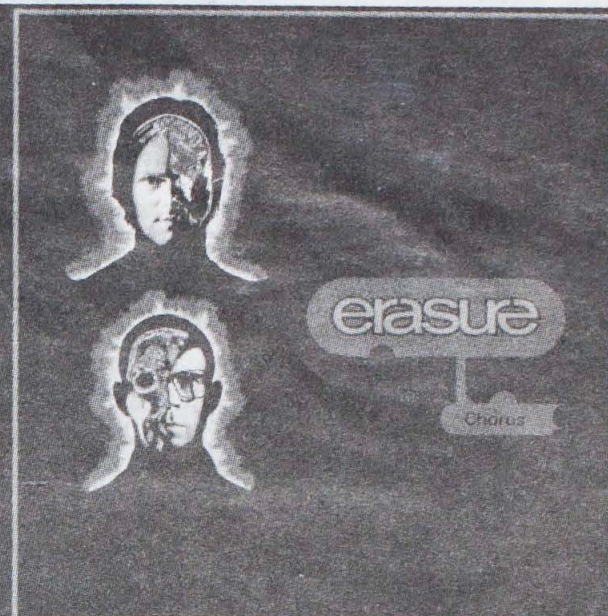
"Sticks & Stones" confronts subjects such as urban renewal, poverty and racism. These factors are probably the only reasons why you would be interested.

"It's in your face," said Brett Mayo, the drummer. "Hey, look what's outside your door. We just write it because we live in it."

If the Toll can pull away from their borrowed hard rock style and form their own sound, then the group can more than likely be a success.

But in the meantime, if you are a fan of copycat groups, then this is your album. If you are not, then it will be a waste of time listening to the Toll.

- Tiffanie Lawhorn
Lane Tech



"CHORUS" proves Erasure has matured

★★★★

After two years, Erasure (Andy Bell and Vince Clarke) has released its fifth release, "Chorus." It possesses the same energy as Erasure's earlier albums, yet the sound has matured. Bell's vocals are just as masterful on "Am I Right" and "Siren Song" as they were on "Piano Song," "How Many Times?" and "Oh L'Amour." He still has an amazing vocal range, as his voice sweeps from a deep bass to an expressive alto. The hyperactive shrillness that was in his voice in "Wild", has disappeared.

At the same time, Clarke continues to lay down the smooth techno tracks that are at the core of Erasure's sound. "Chorus" is an evolution of their earlier work, so if you enjoyed them before, "Chorus" is worth your money.

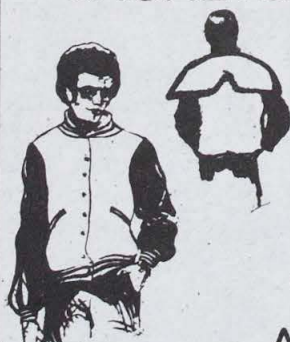
- Alex Hanson
Lane Tech

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